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Remarks:

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's phone call to expedite the prosecution of this application. In that phone call, the Examiner directed our attention to U.S. Patent Publication 2003/0009946 A1 "Wilson", which, in Figure 33c, shows a spring 364 that surrounds the shaft of the mounting screw. He also directed our attention to U.S. Patent 921,854 "Lindemann", which has a vertical spring 21, shown in Figure 3, that tends to return the louvers to the closed position.

With respect to Claim 1, the Examiner requested that we be more specific about the location of the ends of the band brake element, because even a grommet mounted around the mounting pin would have inner and outer axial ends. However, Applicant is not aware of anything in the prior art that teaches the use of a grommet or any other element mounted over the pin and inside the receptacle, applying a radially inwardly directed force against the louver mounting pin, and having first and second ends, with at least one of the ends rotating with the mounting pin, as recited in Claim 1. Therefore, Applicant believes that claim 1 recites an invention that is both novel and unobvious in view of the prior art.

Claim 2 adds the limitation that the receptacle defines a stop for stopping the rotation of at least one of the brake element ends so as to increase frictional resistance to rotation of the mounting pin as the mounting pin begins to rotate. This further distinguishes the claimed invention from the prior art, because it means that stopping one of the brake element ends increases the frictional resistance to rotation, which also is not taught or suggested in the prior art.

Claim 3 further distinguishes the claimed invention from the prior art by requiring a second stop for stopping the rotation of the other of the brake element ends. Again, this is not taught or suggested in the prior art.

Claim 4 depends from claim 1 and adds the limitation that the band brake element is a coil spring which compresses radially inwardly against the pin, and wherein the first and second brake element ends project outwardly. Again, this is not taught or suggested in the prior art.

Claim 5 depends from claim 3 and further requires that the second stop for stopping the rotation of the other of the brake element ends limits the increase of frictional resistance to rotation between the band brake element and the mounting pin. Again, this is not taught or suggested in the prior art.

With respect to Claim 6, the Examiner said that both Lindemann and Wilson provide means for increasing the resistance to rotation of the louvers as the louvers rotate. Therefore, Applicant has amended claim 6 to include the use

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of a plurality of band brakes, each of which applies radially inwardly directed friction force to resist the rotation of its respective louver. Neither Lindemann nor Wilson teaches or suggests the use of such band brakes. The spring 21 of Lindemann applies an axial force. The spring 364 of Wilson also applies an axial force. In addition, it applies some force in a tangential direction against the head of the screw, which would resist rotation in one direction and aid in rotation in the other direction. However, it does not teach or suggest the use of a radially inwardly directed friction force as claimed.

Applicant also has added claims 11 and 12, which distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art, including Lindemann and Wilson. Claim 11 recites means for generating progressively increasing resistance to the rotation of the louvers in response to the rotation of the louvers about their respective axes in both the forward and backward directions. Neither Lindemann nor Wilson has such means, since, to the extent they increase the resistance in response to the rotation of the louvers, they do so only in one direction.

Since all the claims recite an invention that is both novel and unobvious in view of the prior art, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of all the claims now pending in the present application. If there are any remaining problems with this application, Applicant's attorney would appreciate a call from the Examiner to help expedite their resolution.

Respectfully submitted,



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